



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/700,339	11/03/2003	Thomas A. Chodacki	57119 (72011)	5244
21874 7590 04/19/2007 EDWARDS ANGELL PALMER & DODGE LLP P.O. BOX 55874 BOSTON, MA 02205			EXAMINER PRICE, CARL D	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3749	
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
3 MONTHS		04/19/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/700,339

Applicant(s)

CHODACKI ET AL.

Examiner

CARL D. PRICE

Art Unit

3749

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02/02/2007(RCE filed).
2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6, 16, 17, 21, 22 and 32-35 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) -6, 16, 17, 21, 22 and 32-35 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-6, 16, 17, 21, 22 and 32-35 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Applicant has amended the claims to be of a scope not previously considered. Consistent with applicant's argument that the prior art relied on in the previous office action fail to show, disclose and/or teach certain aspects of applicant's invention now recited in the claims filed on 02/02/2007, applicant has amended the claims include at least the following:

- The electric resistance igniter can be re-heated so as to re-ignite the gas within a re-ignition time period **of about 6 second or less.**

In this regard applicant argues that "Pfefferle reports an aircraft gas turbine combustor. See, for instance, column 2 of Pfefferle. Pfefferle does not disclose or otherwise suggest a ceramic igniter or systems that composes an igniter together with an appliance."

In response to applicant's argument the prior art reference of US005899684 (McCoy et al) is now relied on to teach, along with US005660043 (Pfefferle et al), that it is known to maintain the electric resistance igniter at an operational temperature that is less than the gas ignition temperature but above room temperature and so the ceramic electric resistance igniters can be re-heated so as to re-ignite the gas within a re-ignition time period of about 6 second or less. See below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

- (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims: Rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1-6, 16, 17, 21, 22 and 32-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US003589846 (Place) in view of EP000385910B1 and US005660043 (Pfefferle et al) and US005899684 (McCoy et al) (of record).

US003589846 (Place) shows and discloses gas control system that:

- controls energizing an ceramic electric resistance igniter (23) from a power source;
- a switching mechanism (42,52) connected between the electric resistance igniter and the power (L1, 12);
- the electric resistance igniter responsive to an input signal from door and timer switches (42, 49);
- wherein the control device controls operation of the electric resistance igniter (23) so as to warm-up the electric resistance igniter to a temperature at or above an ignition temperature for a gas being combusted; and
- wherein following successful ignition of the gas, operation of the electric resistance igniter is controlled so the electric resistance igniter is at a temperature less than the gas ignition temperature so the electric resistance igniter can be re-heated so as to re-ignite the gas within a desired re-ignition time period. In this regard US003589846 (Place) discloses (see column 5, lines 28-34).

“... The igniter can cause ignition when its temperature is above 1,400⁰ F. to 1,600⁰ F.” (column 4, lines 62-69)

“If ignition occurs properly, sufficient heat is radiated by the flame and the igniter 23 to hold the switch 58 open. In the illustrate embodiment, the igniter drops to about 1000⁰ F, when equilibrium is reached after ignition occurs. This temperature is maintained in the igniter by the presence of the flame and the low voltage applied to the igniter.”

US003589846 (Place) discloses a controlling operation of the igniter so the igniter is at a temperature less than the ignition temperature but above room temperature and within 600⁰ C of the gas ignition temperature. The ignition of the fuel in US003589846 (Place) occurring at

Art Unit: 3749

“above 1,400⁰ F. to 1,600⁰ F.” (760⁰ C to 871⁰ C) and the temperature at which igniter is maintained after ignition occurs being a temperature of **“about 1000⁰ F”** (538⁰ C).

US003589846 (Place) shows and discloses the invention substantially as set forth in the claims with possible exception to the control device including:

- a micro-controller and an applications program for execution in the micro-controller including instructions and criteria for outputting control signals to the switching mechanism to selectively control voltage and current being applied to the electric resistance igniter; and
- the desired re-ignition time period is about six seconds or less.

EP000385910B1 teaches, from the same appliance control field of endeavor as **US003589846 (Place)**, using a micro-controller (M1) and an applications program for execution in the micro-controller including instructions and criteria for outputting control signals to a switching mechanism to selectively control voltage and current being applied to an electric resistance igniter.

US005660043 (Pfefferle et al) is shows and discloses gas control system that:

- controls energizing an ceramic electric resistance igniter (30) from a power source (not shown);
- a switching mechanism (not shown) connected between the electric resistance igniter and the power;
- wherein the control device controls operation of the electric resistance igniter **(column 4, lines 15-30)** so as to warm-up the electric resistance igniter to a temperature at or above an ignition temperature for a gas being combusted; and
- wherein following successful ignition of the gas, operation of the electric resistance igniter is controlled so the electric resistance igniter is at a temperature less than the gas ignition temperature so the electric resistance igniter can be re-heated so as to re-ignite the gas within a desired re-ignition time period. **(column 4, lines 15-30)**

US005899684 (McCoy et al) teaches, from the same appliance control field of endeavor, to provide fast re-ignition period of less than 6 seconds (“if the flame is not detected in less than

Art Unit: 3749

one second after the ignitor is de-energized”) by operating the ignitor from a half-wave voltage phase regulator during normal RUN thus being capable of operating on one half the amplitude of the applied voltage, which would necessarily produce an ignition temperature above ambient and below a fuel ignition temperature.

(5) In the third embodiment of the present invention, a first circuit is provided that applies full-wave voltage to the ignitor only during the preheat and ignition trial periods for ignition purposes. A second circuit is provided that applies half-wave voltage to the ignitor continuously, beginning with the RUN period, **for fast re-ignition and to burn any fuel** coming in contact with the ignitor during the RUN period and **thus prevents carbon buildup on the ignitor**, especially if heavy fuels, such as diesel, are used. A third circuit is provided which automatically adjusts the preheat time and the ignition on-time, depending on the applied line voltage and the current draw of the ignitor.

35) Thus it is an object of the third embodiment of the present invention to operate the said ignitor from **full-wave AC voltage during STARTUP** and on half-wave voltage from a **half-wave voltage phase regulator during normal RUN** thus being capable of operating on one **half the amplitude** of the applied voltage.

In regard to claims 1-6, 16, 17, 21, 22 and 32-35, for the purpose of providing a suitable means for selectively controlling, operating and monitoring the electric resistance igniter of **US003589846 (Place)**, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the controller of **US003589846 (Place)** to include a micro-controller and an applications program for execution in the micro-controller including instructions and criteria for outputting control signals to a switching mechanism to selectively control voltage and current being applied to an electric resistance igniter, in view of the teaching of **EP000385910B1**. Also, in view of the teaching of **US005660043 (Pfefferle et al)** that “continued controlled heating may be utilized to provide near instantaneous relight”, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art to operate **US003589846 (Place)** in a manner which would permit near instantaneous relight, that is, less than six seconds. Notwithstanding the teaching of **US003589846 (Place)**, since the actual warm-up time for a given appliance control application would necessarily depend on numerous design parameters such as the type and amount of fuel burned, the size and type of resistance igniter, the overall size and shape of the burner, etc., to operate **US003589846**.

Art Unit: 3749

(Place) such that the desired re-ignition time period is about six seconds or less can be viewed as nothing more than merely a matter of choice in design absent the showing of any new or unexpected results produced therefrom over the prior art of record. Similarly, selective use of a given fuel ignition system with any given appliance would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art and would be dictated by given installation or design concerns. Therefore to operate the **US003589846 (Place)** ignition system in combination with any one of a stove, oven, clothes dryer, water, etc. using known fuel sources (e.g. – propane) can be viewed as nothing more than merely a matter of choice in design absent the showing of any new or unexpected results produced therefrom over the prior art of record.

Conclusion

See the attached USPTO form 892 for prior art made of record and not relied upon which is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.


Art Unit: 3749

USPTO CUSTOMER CONTACT INFORMATION

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to CARL D. PRICE whose telephone number is (571) 272-4880. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday between 6:30am-3:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kenneth Rinehart can be reached on (571) 272-4881. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



CARL D. PRICE

Primary Examiner

Art Unit 3749

cp